

ASPECTS REGARDING JOB SATISFACTION AND MOTIVATION OF CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ROMANIA

Abstract

Motivation and satisfaction factors of civil servants are important elements that determine their work performance. This paper aims to analyze some aspects of civil service satisfaction, motivating factors, quality of service relationships at the level of local public administration in Romania.

The analysis performed by applying a questionnaire to civil servants from local public administration revealed that the factor that induces the least satisfaction to the civil servants from local public administration is the quality of wage system in the public administration. Equally, employees in the public administration pointed out that political pressure is an element that provides a low degree of satisfaction. By contrast, a high degree of satisfaction is provided by factors such as attention from colleagues, from the management of the institution, and workplace conditions.

The most important motivation factor for the civil servants is a better recognition by the society of the importance of work. By contrast, the prospect of a successful career in the public and competition at the institution level for quality work is the most unimportant factors in motivating civil servants. Surprisingly, the salary is only the sixth motivator, even if the monthly income of civil servants is below their expectations. The results obtained from processing data sets highlight also positive aspects about the quality of relations in the civil service within local public administration in Romania.

Keywords: motivation, satisfaction, local public administration, civil servants

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ASPECTE PRIVIND SATISFACTIA ȘI MOTIVAREA FUNȚIONARILOR PUBLICI DIN ADMINISTRAȚIA PUBLICĂ LOCALĂ DIN ROMÂNIA

Alina Georgiana PROFIROIU

Associate Professor Ph.D., Administration and Public Management Faculty, Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies

E-mail: alina_profiroiu@yahoo.com

Rezumat

Factorii de motivare și gradul de satisfacție a funcționarilor publici constituie elemente importante care determină performanța acestora la locul de muncă. Lucrarea de față își propune să analizeze unele aspecte legate de satisfacția funcționarilor publici, factorii de motivare, calitatea relațiilor de serviciu de la nivelul administrației publice locale din România.

Din analizele efectuate prin aplicarea unui chestionar funcționarilor din administrația locală a rezultat faptul că factorul care induce cea mai mică satisfacție funcționarilor publici din administrația locală este calitatea sistemului de salarizare de la nivelul administrației publice. În egală măsură, angajații din administrația publică au semnalat că presiunea exercitată de sistemul politic reprezintă un element care asigură un grad mic de satisfacție. În schimb, un grad ridicat de satisfacție este asigurat de factori precum: atenția din partea colegilor, a conducerii instituției și condițiile de la locul de muncă.

Cel mai important factor de motivare pentru angajații din administrația publică este o mai bună punere în valoare la nivelul societății a importanței muncii prestate. În schimb, perspectiva unei cariere de succes în funcția publică și competiția de la nivelul instituției pentru o muncă de calitate reprezintă factorii cei mai neimportanți în motivarea funcționarilor publici. Surprinzător este că salarizarea reprezintă numai al șaselea factor de motivare, chiar dacă veniturile lunare ale angajaților din administrația publică sunt cu mult sub așteptările acestora.

Rezultatele obținute în urma prelucrării seriilor de date scot în evidență și aspecte pozitive legate de calitatea relațiilor de serviciu la nivelul funcției publice din administrația locală din România.

Cuvinte cheie: motivare, satisfacție, administrația publică locală, funcționari publici



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1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH METHODS

Locke (1976) defined the job satisfaction as the "pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience". Job satisfaction is commonly explained using the person-environment fit paradigm or need-satisfaction model (Davis and Newstrom, 1999; Harmermesh, 2001). The more a job fulfills the workers' needs, the higher should be their job satisfaction levels (Kristof-Brown, 1996).

Creta and Sandor (2011) propose a classification of the motives or needs of the public servants in three categories- rational (instrumental, regarding participation in the process of policy formulation, commitment to a public program because of personal identification, advocacy for a special or private interest), norm based (a desire to serve public interest, loyalty or duty to the government, social equity) and affective (commitment to a program from a conviction about its social importance, patriotism or benevolence).

Perry and Wise (1990) suggest that there is a specific motivation of the public service's employees. They defined Public Service Motivation as "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations and has been likened to an intrinsic motivator reflective of public sector work".

Compared to their private sector counterparts, government workers are reported to be motivated more by the intrinsic aspects of their work, such as an interesting job, and less by the extrinsic features such as high pay (Rainey, 1982; Buelens and van den Broeck, 2007). Perry (1996) argues that one of the most commonly identified normative foundations for public service is commitment to the public interest.

For analyzing some relevant aspects related to the Romanian local public administration capacity, a statistical research was organized based on a statistical sampling. In the applied questionnaire there were included questions on the aspects of civil servants satisfaction, motivation factors, quality of work relationships. In the questionnaire there were included a series of questions to describe some personal features such as gender and age of the respondents; characteristics of the community in which they work and live; the type, the size and the development region from which the respondent come, the education level of the person; the type of local public administration institution, the religion practiced and the organizations in which is affiliated (political party, union, professional organization, other organizations)."

Within the study there were included civil servants from following categories of institutions: institutions from the County Councils – 40 counties: 240 civil servants; Bucharest City Hall and 1-6 District City Halls: 70 civil servants; City Hall from Municipalities, county residence – 21 counties: 126 civil servants; City Hall from Towns and Munivipalities – 42 counties: 210 civil servants; City Hall from 187 Communes: 374 civil servants.

For constructing the sample it was used a technique that comprised two phase, its volume representing 0.6% of the total population of the civil servants from the local public administration in Romania. Parameter estimation error is 1.2%, and the results are guaranteed with a probability of 98%. The processing of the database was done using SPSS software.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE SATISFACTION DEGREE OF THE CIVIL SERVANTS

The satisfaction degree of the civil servants within the present research was measured in relation with the following characteristics:

- montly average wage (A2_11),
- respect from the colleagues (A2_12),
- respect from the citizens (A2_13),
- respect from the direct supervisor (A2_14),
- respect from the institution' management (A2_15),
- quality of the working conditions (A2_16),
- quality of the office computer (A2_17),
- quality of the internet link (A2_18),
- political preasure that is exerciced on the civil servant (A2_19).

For defining the nine variables it was used a measure scale with following values: 0 – not satisfies, 1 – somehow satisfied, 2 – moderate satisfied, 3 – satisfied, 4 – totally satisfied and 9 – none response.

Based on the registered data series there obtained following results: in the Table 1 are presented the mean values and the distribution on the nine variables; in Table 2 are presented distribution of responses for the nine variables. In the graph from Figure 1 are presented the cumulative frequency for the characteristics used for analyzing the satisfaction degree of the employees from public administration.

TABLE 1 - DESCRIPTIVE INDICATORS FOR THE VARIABLES USED IN APPRECIATION OF THE SATISFACTION DEGREE OF THE
 CIVIL SERVANTS

| | A2_11 | A2_12 | A2_13 | A2_14 | A2_15 | A2_16 | A2_17 | A2_18 | A2_19 |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Mean | 1.77 | 2.88 | 2.81 | 3.10 | 3.04 | 3.07 | 2.96 | 2.84 | 1.90 |
| Median | 2.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 2.00 |
| Std. dev. | 1.22 | .932 | 1.07 | 1.02 | 1.04 | 1.19 | 1.24 | 1.44 | 1,30 |
| Skewness | 1.2 | 0.76 | 1.75 | -0.03 | 0.01 | 0.05 | 0.15 | 0.44 | 0,13 |
| Kurtosis | 6.27 | 8.42 | 10.58 | 5.46 | 4.86 | 4.42 | 3.62 | 3.31 | -1.05 |

TABLE 2 - ANSWERS DISTRIBUTION FOR THE NINE CHARACTERISTICS USED IN ANALYZING THE SATISFACTION DEGREE OF
 THE CIVIL SERVANTS (%)

| | A2_11 | A2_12 | A2_13 | A2_14 | A2_15 | A2_16 | A2_17 | A2_18 | A2_19 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 0 | 16,7 | 1,4 | 0,8 | 2,7 | 2,5 | 4,1 | 4,1 | 7,9 | 13,1 |
| 1 | 19,7 | 3,8 | 7,1 | 2,7 | 4,6 | 5,4 | 8,8 | 9,2 | 21,3 |
| 2 | 41,2 | 22,9 | 25,9 | 16,2 | 16,7 | 14,8 | 15,8 | 16,7 | 24,2 |
| 3 | 16,2 | 51,1 | 47,6 | 40,1 | 40,4 | 34,0 | 33,3 | 29,5 | 13,9 |
| 4 | 5,0 | 20,2 | 17,4 | 37,5 | 35,0 | 40,9 | 37,1 | 35,2 | 15,5 |
| 9 | 1,1 | 0,7 | 1,3 | 0,8 | 0,8 | 0,8 | 0,8 | 1,4 | 12,0 |
| Total | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

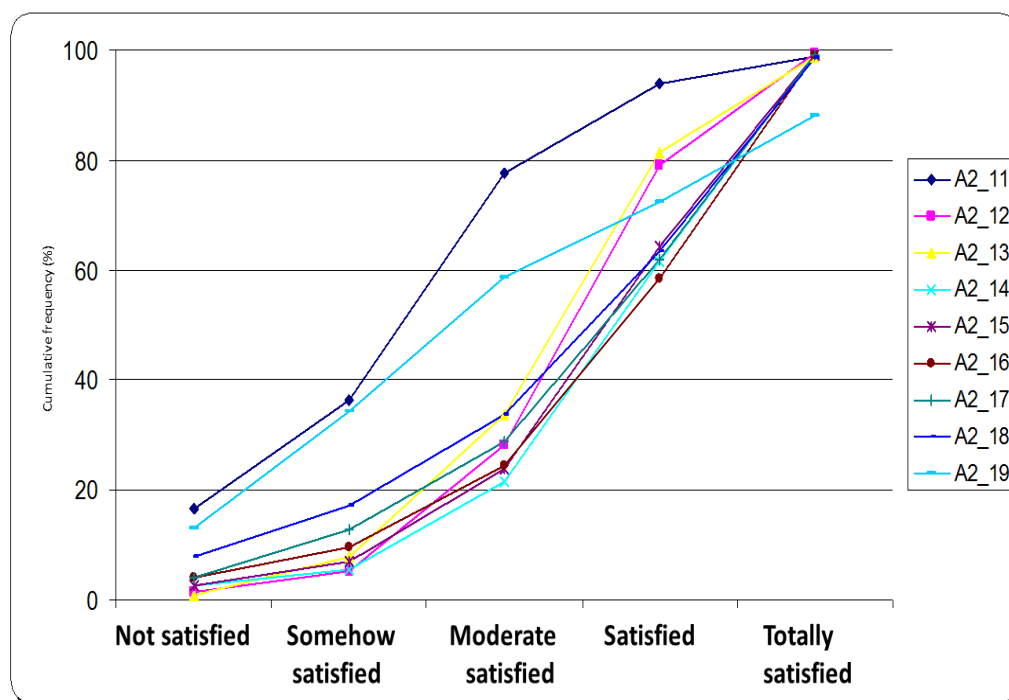


FIGURE 1 - CUMULATIVE FREQUENCIES FOR THE CHARACTERISTICS USED IN ANALYZING
 THE SATISFACTION DEGREE OF THE CIVIL SERVANTS

The results obtained allow formulation of some comments on the satisfaction degree of the civil servants, reported to the nine considered factors. It should be noted that these comments are valid to the entire population, without considering the characteristics of the population segmentation. This analysis could be performed on different population groups, defined by the demographic, professional, social and institutional characteristics. The main comments are formulated as follows:

- The lowest satisfaction level is on the earning received by the civil servants from local public administration. There were 16.7% respondents that declared that they are not satisfied with the obtained real income. The mean of this variable, defined on a scale from 0 to 4, is 1.77. This value indicates that the pay system is not a motivational element for hiring within civil service and in motivation of civil servants to obtain work performance. In fact, for this criteria there is the least number of satisfied respondents (only 5% declared a total satisfaction reported to the monthly earning).
- Another element for which the civil servant is not satisfied is the pressure exercised by the political system over the public function. The mean of this variable is 1.9, indicating a high intervention of the political system over the civil servants from local public administration. In the graph presented in Figure 1 could be noticed that for this variable there is a relatively uniform spread of the respondents on the five classes of response options. Furthermore, it can be highlighted the large proportion (12%) of respondents that did not provide any answer to the question that defined this variable. Also, the proportion of respondents that didn't answer or indicated that are not satisfied or are somehow satisfied totals 46%. By contrast, the proportion of respondents that declared that are satisfied is 29.4%. It is mentioned that for the two variables (A2_11 and A2_19) the variable is 2.
- The respect for direct supervisor, as well as from the institution's management represents the factors that have a positive contribution on the satisfaction degree of the civil servants. Actually, for these variables are registered the highest mean (3.10). Also, 77.6% respondents declared that are satisfied and 75.4% totally satisfied regarding the respect from the direct supervisor, respectively from the management of the institution.
- The other seven factors have a positive influence on the satisfaction degree of the civil servants. It should be noted that the positive influence of the respect from colleagues and citizens on defining the satisfaction degree of the civil servants.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF THE JOB SATISFACTION'S FACTORS IN ROMANIAN LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Considering a series of studies carried out at the public administration level, within this study it was approached the measurement of the satisfaction degree of the civil servants reported to the following factors:

- pay system (A2_21),
- working conditions (A2_22),
- perspective of a succesful career (A2_23),
- recongnition, by the supervisors, of the work performed (A2_24),
- satisfaction of being useful for the community and society (A2_25),
- existence of a permanent competition within the institution for excellence in activity (A2_26),
- communication wihin the team (A2_27),
- independence to have initiatives (A2_28),
- other (A2_29).

For measuring the importance of each factor in motivating the civil servants it was defined a measure scale from 1 (the respondent considers that the factor is not important in for motivation) to 5 (the factor is very important for motivation). For the nine variables it was calculated a series of descriptive indicators for measuring the average level, the asymmetry and flattening of the data series obtained at the sample level, as well as the relative frequencies for each of the answer option, which is defined for each individual characteristic. These values are presented in the Table 3 and Table 4.

TABLE 3 - DESCRIPTIVE INDICATORS CALCULATED FOR THE VARIABLES USED FOR APPRECIATION OF THE SATISFACTION
DEGREE OF THE CIVIL SERVANTS

| | A2_21 | A2_22 | A2_23 | A2_24 | A2_25 | A2_26 | A2_27 | A2_28 |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Not at all (1) | 4,7 | 2,1 | 5,1 | 3,0 | 3,2 | 3,6 | 2,2 | 2,1 |
| Insignificant (2) | 4,6 | 4,3 | 8,5 | 4,6 | 1,7 | 5,8 | 2,7 | 4,1 |
| Moderate (3) | 17,7 | 16,0 | 23,1 | 15,8 | 8,1 | 23,5 | 11,7 | 14,1 |
| Pretty much (4) | 30,3 | 41,2 | 31,1 | 30,2 | 35,4 | 36,2 | 32,7 | 34,8 |
| To a large degree (5) | 41,9 | 35,5 | 30,2 | 45,3 | 51,3 | 29,9 | 50,2 | 43,9 |
| Non response | 0,8 | 0,9 | 2,1 | 1,1 | 0,3 | 0,9 | 0,5 | 1,1 |
| Total | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

TABLE 4 - ANSWERS DISTRIBUTION FOR THE NINE CHARACTERISTICS USED FOR ANALYZING THE SATISFACTION DEGREE OF
THE CIVIL SERVANTS (%)

| | A2_21 | A2_22 | A2_23 | A2_24 | A2_25 | A2_26 | A2_27 | A2_28 |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Mean | 4,05 | 4,1 | 3,90 | 4,20 | 4,32 | 3,88 | 4,29 | 4,21 |
| Median | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Std. dev. | 1,18 | 1,05 | 1,35 | 1,15 | 0,96 | 1,15 | 0,98 | 1,08 |
| Skewness | -0,37 | 0,15 | 0,57 | -0,11 | -1,21 | 0,17 | -0,74 | -0,05 |
| Kurtosis | 2,23 | 4,22 | 2,90 | 3,17 | 4,30 | 2,99 | 3,66 | 4,05 |

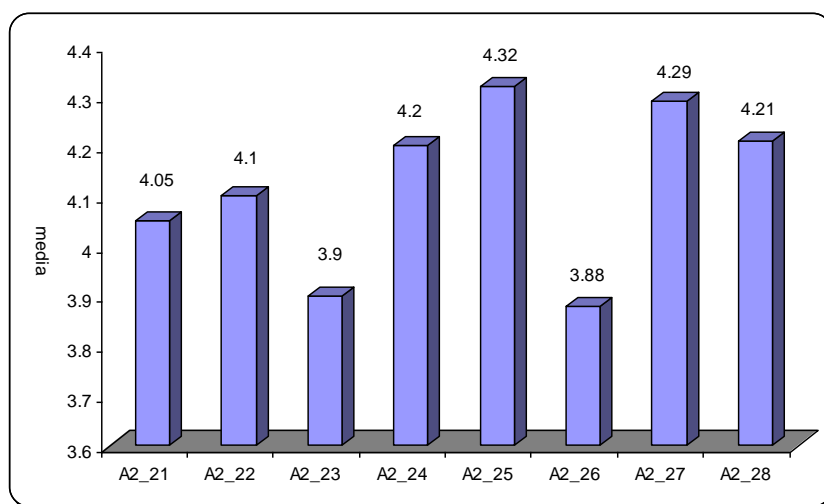


FIGURE 2 - THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FACTORS IN MOTIVATION OF THE CIVIL SERVANTS

- The most important motivational factor is represented by the satisfaction of performing useful tasks in the benefit of the community and society, followed by the communication within the team. More than 50% respondents underlined that these are the most important motivational factors. The independence on having initiatives and recognition of the work, represents other two important motivational factors within the local public administration from Romania.

- Hierarchical, the pay system represents only the sixth motivational factor, despite the fact that the monthly income of the civil servants is the factor considered as most unsatisfactory by civil servants.
- The perspective of having a successful career in civil service does not represent an important factor in motivating the civil servants, fact which demonstrates a lack of perspective in the career evolution, and moreover a lack of trust in the perspective of such career. At the same time, the factor that motivates the least is the existence of a permanent competition within the institution for excellence in activity.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The factor that provides the least satisfaction for civil servants in local public administration is the quality of the pay system at the level of the public administration. Equally, the civil servants from public administration signaled the pressure from the political system, which represents an element that determines a low level of satisfaction. Instead, a high degree of satisfaction is provided by factors, such: attention from colleagues, from institution' management and working environment. People mobilize their efforts based on their anticipatory estimates of what is necessary for goal attainment. Therefore, at the outset, a goal can enhance performance before any feedback is provided (Latham, 2007).

The most important motivational factor for civil servants from Romanian local public administration is the recognition of the importance of their work at the society level. By contrary, the perspective of a successful career in civil service and the competition within the institution for excellence in activity are the least important factor in motivating the civil servants. Surprisingly, the pay system represents only the sixth motivational factor, even the monthly income of the civil servants from public administration are far below their expectations.

The results obtained after analyzing the data series are also emphasizing positive aspects related to the quality of the work cooperation at the level of civil service.

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